

APPENDIX A

WORKSHOP NOTES & ISSUES THAT WERE NOT CONSIDERED

MEMORANDUM

Date: July 6, 2001

To: SBTCS Workshop Participants

From: Marni C. Heffron, P.E.

Subject: South Ballard Transportation Corridor Study
Summary of June 19, 2001 Workshop

This memorandum summarizes input received from participants at the June 19, 2001 SBTCS workshop. A list of workshop attendees is attached.

The workshop first sought input related to issues for all land modes of transportation. The second half of the workshop was spent brainstorming potential solutions to the issues. All ideas were recorded. The issues and potential solutions are summarized below.

Transportation Issues

Commuter Traffic

Leary Way

- Leary Way is underutilized between Market Street and 15th Avenue. This section of roadway has excess capacity between the two intersections.
- Synchronization of traffic signals on Leary Way is needed.
- A signal is proposed for the intersection of Leary Way/N 46th Street to help left-turn and crossing movements.
- Parking along Leary Way south of 47th Street can create congestion and confusion during off-peak times. The on-street parking reduces the street from five travel lanes to three.
- There are several five-legged intersections along the diagonal section of Leary Way between Market Street and 15th Avenue that are difficult to control.
- Leary Way/17th Avenue intersection is vast. Connections on the south side of the intersection are confusing. This intersection needs better definition.
- Leary Way/20th Avenue intersection also lacks definition.
- Leary Way/11th Avenue intersection is unsignalized and has limited sight lines because of curve located to east.
- Leary Way/3rd Avenue intersection is becoming a problem. A traffic signal may help alleviate problem, but would likely increase traffic on 3rd Avenue, which is not desired.
- Vehicular speed on Leary Way appears to be too high.

Shilshole Avenue/46th Street/45th Street Corridor

- Shilshole Avenue is over-utilized.
- Left turns are difficult to make at the intersection of Shilshole Avenue/17th Avenue
- Motorists have been observed to go through the stop sign at the 46th Street/9th Avenue intersection without stopping.
- Intersection at 24th Avenue/54th Street intersection (just south of Market Street) is awkward and potentially dangerous. It is difficult for northbound trucks to make the sharp right turn onto Shilshole Avenue.

Market Street

- Market Street is required to handle too many functions—local circulation, through commuter street, transit street—it is a mess and is the last choice for many motorists. Problems with signals, buses and signage may start far away from this corridor. Motorists are using other streets in the area (Shilshole, 65th Street, etc.) to avoid the congestion on Market Street.
- Synchronization of traffic signals on Market Street is needed (the City and Metro are currently working on a signal interconnect project for the section of Market Street between 24th Avenue and 12th Avenue.)
- In-lane transit stop on Market Street west of Leary Way causes delays to non-bus traffic.

Ballard Avenue

- Past change of Ballard Avenue (between Market Street and 22nd Avenue) from two-way street to a one-way street caused traffic volumes on Shilshole Avenue to increase.
- One-way traffic on Ballard Avenue allowed for a small increase in parking along this street; however, one merchant would prefer to have higher visibility that higher traffic volumes create instead of the additional parking.
- Ballard Avenue/17th Avenue intersection can be confusing.

Other

- There is no good connection to the Ballard Bridge from Shilshole Avenue, which forces motorists to wind through on 17th to get to Ballard Avenue or Leary Way access ramps.
- No good signage directing motorists and other modes of transportation to various routes.

Truck Issues

- Truck movement to the Ship Canal is critical to the maritime industries. Most commodities serving the maritime industry (including fuel) are trucked to the area.
- Many of the industries have awkward loading configurations that require backing maneuvers. For example, several trucks + trailers per day have to back down the ramp to Barnacle Point and/or Ballard Oil.

- It is cost and time prohibitive to ship most commodities by rail for short distances. Ballard Oil and Covich-Williams truck their fuel from Harbor Island (where it arrives by pipeline).
- Turning radii, grade, and routes to connect to the regional arterials (SR 99, I-5, and I-90) are critical.

Rail Issues

- Rail bed and public crossings have been upgraded in the past 3½ years since Ballard Terminal Railroad Company (BTRC) took over the line. The rail can now accommodate the heaviest freight cars (e.g., 114 tons of payload for sand/gravel cars).
- Track is in good enough condition that it could probably be used to carry passenger trains.
- The south end of the line is at 40th Street/6th Avenue and the north end of the line is north of Seaview Avenue (across from Ray's Boathouse).
- Locomotive shop is located near 8th Avenue/43rd Street intersection.
- Future plans (next 5 to 6 years) include:
 - New siding adjacent to Western Pioneer
 - Level unloading ramp near Ballard Transfer between 24th Avenue and 26th Avenue
 - Develop construction and equipment storage area between 11th Avenue and 14th Avenue.
 - Potential re-use of Bardahl Oil spur (located in the 14th Avenue right-of-way)
 - Potential re-use of Rudd Paint Spur.
- Parking issues are largely solved. They set up "No Parking" signs on sawhorses the day before a train movement to prevent parking on the tracks. The "No Parking" signs on the telephone poles were not effective. They will tow cars if necessary, but prefer not to and would rather find owners of the vehicles parked on the tracks.
- BTRC opposes use of the rail right-of-way for the Burke-Gilman trail extension. There are too many functions that need to be accommodated, particularly in the section between 15th and 30th Avenues (parking, truck loading/unloading, railcar sidings, etc.)

Transit Issues

- Market Street is Metro's main transit corridor in the study area. Congestion on Market Street affects transit reliability, which is Metro's primary concern. Metro is working with City to synchronize the traffic signals along Market Street between 24th Avenue and 12th Avenue.
- Route 44 to the University District is one of Metro's best-utilized routes. Buses run every 15 minutes, with the goal to provide 7 to 8-minute headways.
- Improvements are proposed for the Market Street/24th Avenue intersection, but are not funded.
- Metro is re-establishing some service on the route to Golden Gardens that was eliminated by poor ridership and the loss of funding resulting from I-695. Prior to February 2000, this route operated approximately 8 hours per day, 5 days per week on 35-minute headways. The new route includes seven peak-direction and five off-peak direction trips per day during peak periods, 5 days per week/
- In-lane stops or other options on Market Street and elsewhere are desired on key transit corridors to maintain and improve transit speed and reliability.
- Metro is evaluating a Ballard/Fremont route.

- There is concern from merchants that potential for high-capacity transit on Market Street could eliminate on-street parking.

Bicycle Issues

- Completing the Burke-Gilman Trail to Golden Gardens is the top priority for the bike community.
- Safety and convenience are high priorities for bicyclists. Routes without hills are best.
- There are differences between commuter bicyclists (desire fast and direct routes) and recreational bicyclists (desire pleasant ride and connection between destinations). Recreational bicyclists desire connection to Golden Gardens.
- Elements that are particularly difficult for bicyclists include: on-street parking (car door openings), cross streets (potential of not being seen by motorists turning onto street), railroad tracks (particularly if they cross street at less than 90-degree angle), and uneven road surface (gravel or potholes).
- Bicyclists avoid Leary Way because of speed and volume of traffic.
- Intersection at Leary Way/17th Avenue is horrible because of wide area and many cross streets.
- Rail crossing under Ballard Bridge requires bicyclists to swerve into traffic to cross tracks at a right angle.
- Poor condition of shoulder on Shilshole Avenue requires bicyclists to ride in lane.
- There is irregular parking along sections of Shilshole Avenue and 46th Street. Sometimes vehicles park closer to street and leave walkway available, other cars park across walkway. This causes bicycles to weave through parked vehicles.
- Good design can be used to solve some of these problems. The trail connection does not need to be the same design as through Fremont. Area along Shilshole Avenue is the biggest challenge.
- Narrow passageways across the Locks restrict bicycle movements. Corps of Engineers is looking at the existing passageways. If they could be widened, a bicycle connection could be possible between the Burke-Gilman Trail and the Ship Canal and Elliott Bay Trails through Interbay.

Pedestrian Issues

- Pedestrians are most vulnerable mode of travel.
- Lack of traffic control to slow or stop vehicles on Market Street west of 24th Avenue is an issue for pedestrian crossings. This is a four-lane roadway with no traffic signals.
- There is more development coming to Ballard. Pedestrian connections need to be improved (particularly to Leary Way and Market Street) so that people walk instead of drive for short trips to/through Ballard.
- There needs to be a good place for pedestrians to cross Shilshole Avenue. A crossing has been proposed for Vernon Avenue.
- There is an intermittent sidewalk on Shilshole Avenue. It does not connect through.

- It is difficult to cross 24th Avenue north of Market Street (e.g., at 56th Street).
- It is confusing for bicyclists and pedestrians to negotiate access to/from the Ballard Bridge.

Parking Issues

- Parking along Shilshole Avenue is important for the area. Don't underestimate its value.
- Peak parking demand occurs during winter months when the fleet is in port.
- Parking contributes to congestion on Market Street between Leary Way and 24th Avenue.
- Loading zones on Market Street are inadequate, and trucks often double-park or park illegally. Loading zones are not currently restricted to commercial vehicles only, and may need shorter time limits.
- Ballard Avenue was converted to a one-way street to increase parking supply.
- Businesses need to maintain truck marshalling, loading, and maneuvering areas.
- Friday and Saturday evening/night entertainment businesses in Ballard have a high demand for parking, and make extensive use of parking along Shilshole Avenue.
- Alternative modes of transportation will reduce demand for parking (and traffic congestion).
- Consider constructing a parking garage to serve the commercial area.

Public Access/Street End Issues

- Street end at 11th Avenue is currently an undeveloped blackberry patch.
- Boat ramp at 14th Avenue conflicts with adjacent use. Trailer parking is an issue.
- Street end at 15th Avenue (under the Bridge) is being evaluated by the City and private businesses in the area. Discussions include a possible skate park.
- 17th Avenue does not have a street end, but this is an important connection between the waterfront and Ballard.
- Public access at 20th Avenue is hidden.
- The public pier at 24th Avenue includes pedestrian access to the Yankee Diner.
- Street end at 28th Avenue has been improved with a bench and shrubs.
- BINMIC supports reserving street ends for industrial uses except for the ones currently being used for public access.
- Improvements to street ends can serve employees of industrial businesses by providing a refuge during lunch and break times.
- Improvements do not need to create destination parks. These could be designed for local use.

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Improvement Options That Are Outside the Scope of SBTC Study

There were several issues raised at the workshop and subsequent meetings that the City determined were outside the scope of the SBTC Study. These included issues related to transit service and facilities that are provided by non-City agencies such as King County Metro or the new Elevated Transportation Company (monorail). Transit facilities that are affected by changes in the street design or circulation pattern, as well as on-street parking that may be affected by the street design are evaluated as part of this study. Issues were also raised related to parking facilities, which the City deemed would not be appropriate to evaluate in this study. Table A-1 lists the items that were raised during the study, but which are outside of the scope of this study.

Table A-1. Improvement Options That Are Outside the Scope of the SBTC Study

Description	Potential to Evaluate
Transit Improvements	
i. Construct multi-level transit connections to/from the Ballard Bridge to/from Leary or 15th Ave.	Alternatives to provide faster, more reliable transit service across the ship canal and into Ballard were analyzed in the Seattle Transit Study and will continue to be evaluated by the Elevated Transit Company (ETC)
ii. Create shorter circulator routes with smaller buses that serve people who live in Ballard. The routes should run more often, later in the evening, and be tested for a year or two to build ridership.	King County/Metro as part of transit service planning.
iii. Consider using 14th Avenue for future high-speed transit route.	Elevated Transit Company (ETC)
iv. Implement alternative east-west routes to #44.	King County/Metro as part of transit service planning
v. Implement commuter rail service on the rail line linking to Fremont. This service could be extended north to Kenmore on the Burke-Gilman Railroad.	Seattle Transit Study may look at intermediate capacity transit between Ballard and the University District.
vi. Consider high-capacity transit on Market Street (e.g., trolley or monorail).	Seattle Transit Study
vii. Consider the future commuter rail station on Seaview Avenue (near Shilshole Bay Marina). A northern connection to this station site should be considered. Better bus feeder service is needed between the inner core area and the station.	Sound Transit Planning
viii. Consider water taxis as a transit option.	Private sector, who is now operating water taxi service to Fremont.
Parking Improvements	
ix. Construct two parking garages—one at each end of Market Street—to accommodate parking needs of the commercial core.	The potential demand for parking garages could be addressed through a neighborhood parking study. City Council Resolution 30369 provides guidelines for considering the investment of City funds in parking facilities

Description	Potential to Evaluate
x. Construct parking garage under the new park/municipal center site.	Could be addressed in a neighborhood parking study or municipal center planning process. City Council Resolution 30369.
xi. Consider raising parking prices in Ballard (currently no charge for on-street parking since meters have been hooded or removed.)	Could be addressed in a neighborhood parking study.
xii. Utilize off-street parking south of Shilshole Avenue to off-set parking losses along the study corridor	May be considered if any improvements result in substantial decreases in on-street parking. Or may be addressed in a neighborhood parking study.
xiii. Provide additional truck loading zones on Market Street. Restrict use to commercial vehicles only and institute shorter time limits.	Commercial vehicle loading zones are generally installed on request. Could also be addressed in a neighborhood parking study.
Policy Measures	
xiv. Expedite permitting of street improvements	Implementation issue that is beyond scope of this study.
xv. Improve street widths and eliminate planting strips in the area bounded by 54th Street, 11th Avenue, Leary Way, and 15th Avenue.	Peripheral to study.
xvi. Street Ends	Use of street ends needs to be considered on an individual basis.

There were also many suggestions made during the study that were excluded from the analysis. These suggestions and the reason for excluding them are described in Table A-2.

Table A-2. Suggestions That Were Excluded from the Analysis

Suggested Change	Reason to Exclude from Analysis
Create a one-way couplet with Leary Way one-way northbound and Shilshole Avenue/46th Street one-way southbound between the intersections of Leary Way/ 46th Street and Market Street/Shilshole Avenue/24th Avenue	Shilshole Avenue and Leary Way are too far apart to make an effective one-way couplet. It would be difficult to sign for drivers who are unfamiliar with the area. Also, Ballard Avenue, between these two streets, would likely experience substantial increases in traffic as motorists use Ballard Avenue to loop the block.
Construct new ramps from Ballard Bridge to Shilshole Avenue.	Would likely substantially increase traffic on Shilshole Avenue, which may not be desired. The grade difference between the bridge and Shilshole Avenue, and need to provide clearance for rail and trucks may make ramps infeasible.
Create a linkage for pedestrians and bicycles between Ballard Avenue and west through where parking garage exists today and a grade-separated connection over Shilshole Avenue to the railroad ROW.	No public right-of-way exists for such an improvement; therefore, costs for linkage would likely make it unfeasible.
Create one-way couplet on the north-south streets serving Fred Meyer (9th & 11th).	Intersection at Leary Way/9th/48th would be awkward and located on a curve. One-way system would not likely solve any existing traffic issues.
Remove bus stops on Market Street between Leary Way and 24th Avenue to reduce congestion in the core area. These bus stops would be relocated outside of this core area.	New transit hub stop has already been designed for the intersections at Market Street/Ballard Avenue. This had an extensive public process and support from the Ballard Community. The improvement is ready to go to bid.
Have City of Seattle provide local bus service if King County/Metro cannot.	Outside the scope of this study. May not result in improved service, which was intent of suggestion.